/839 cont./

X 881 625 the Great Hut unwittingly. They probably have no conscious purpose in doing so, but the adults wish to protect themselves against all eventualities. In order to intimidate the unbidden and to keep them within bounds, the guard sometimes climbs up the framework to the uppermost part of the Great Hut. From this vantage point he sends forth his customary call in a loud voice. Its effect is not lost, for with lightning speed the startled children creep into the nearest dwelling and do not appear again for a long time. During my first initiation the guard was obliged to resort to this practice repeatedly, for at that time the dwellings were dangerously near the čiéxaus hut. Moreover, the winefkéʷa has to keep a special eye on the candidates as long as they are outside the Great Hut and within his field or vision. He emphatically inculcates on each of them the habit of giving an audible call at brief intervals so he can /840/ locate any one of them in a moment. Unseemly conduct on the part of the candidates is hardly to be feared, however. Finally, in former times he had to watch for the approach [721] of enemies who could have taken advantage of the opportunity to rob and set fire to the deserted dwellings while the owners were in the čiéxaus hut. In recent times this precaution is unnecessary.

In former times an energetic, lively, and prudent younger man was always chosen to the office of winefkéʷa. Nowadays he need not take his task too seriously. What, for example, could have been accomplished by old Tomas who offered his services for the post at the initiation in March, 1922? On the first evening he was not even present in the Great Hut. He would not have had anything to do anyway, for there was no disturbance outside.

X 881 625 302 When several uswaala are sitting in the čiéxaus, the professional duty of the guard is increased. In order to relieve him, the leader, after a discussion with him, chooses a few younger men as his assistants. In March, 1922, none were selected because they were not needed; at my first initiation, however, they had enough to do. They do not occupy a particular place in the Great Hut, any more than does the winefkéʷa. Formerly they were painted just as he was, whereas today the body painting is limited to the forearm, lower leg, and face. On these parts of the body they too, put a white background upon which they draw

/1000 cont./

628
•721 Although isolated quarrels and fights between two persons may have occurred often, a battle between two groups provoked by a murder was rare, for a murder is now and then secretly avenged by a single relative of the slain person. The Yamana are not familiar with actual marauding attacks by one group upon another, such as are customary elsewhere. Influential men sometimes try to mediate disputes with friendly words. Fitz-Roy (a): *179 reliably reported:* "Warfare is so desultory, and on so small a scale among them, that the restraint and direction of their elders advised as they are by the doctors, is sufficient" /cited in English/. Despard (b):717 expressed himself just as definitely: "Warfare is not fashionable among them" /cited in English/. The basic way of life among the Yamana is not such as to permit them prolonged fights and constant quarrels (425). Every murder agitates them

425. Dabbene (b):194 is right when he says: "Wars, in the true sense of the word, whether between themselves or with neighboring tribes, have always been very rare" /translated from Spanish/.

terribly, and its effect is long-lasting. Persons who have more or less settled serious quarrels between them avoid meeting each other as much as possible.

G. General Social Obligations

101 The Yamana as an ethnic unit are separated from all their neighbors by natural boundaries alone. Everyone recognizes his membership in this ethnic unit by a common language and mode of life. Just as definitely as they differentiate themselves from other peoples by the name Yámana (p. 197 /untranslated/), they also simultaneously emphasize the solidarity of all fellow-tribesmen in the same area. This entails many personal rights, but also obligations of all for one and of one for the society. The rights to obtain food belong among the former; property relations are based upon the latter.

2: Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 SH6 Yahgan SH6

clubs, fists, and so forth were used freely, with no holds barred, but grave wounds or deaths were uncommon. Organized warfare did not exist, and the *Yahgan* had no defensive weapons. The weapons used in their feuds were primarily made for, and adapted to, hunting.

Social relations within and between the dialectic and local groups appear to have been normally irenic, but violence and bloodshed were not infrequent. The friends of fighting parties usually intervened, both by persuasion and by force, to restore peace. A murder was strongly condemned, and the murderer often became an outcast. Bridges found 22 cases of homicide between 1871 and 1884—an annual rate per population something like 10 times as high as that of the United States. Mercy killings occurred for the purpose of putting an end to the sufferings of the hopelessly ill. Human sacrifice was unknown; so too was premeditated suicide.

The evidence that the *Yahgan* practiced no form of cannibalism—gastronomic, famine, ritual, or other—is convincing beyond all reasonable doubt. They would not even eat animals suspected of devouring human flesh.

ECONOMIC LIFE

Ownership.—The *Yahgan* resented and avenged exploitative trespass upon their tribal territory or attempted occupation of any part thereof by non-*Yahgan*, Indian or White. So, too, did members of any one of the five dialectic groups (Gusinde, 1937, pp. 964–965) or, according to Koppers (1928 b, p. 176), of any one of the numerous local groups, by nonmembers. Since these local groups seemingly were chiefly kinship groups (cf. supra, Political Life), the *Yahgan* land-tenure system resembled the family-hunting-ground system. There was no exclusive tenure by kinship circles as such, by biological families, or by individuals.

Members of one dialectic or local group could, however, exploit the territory of other groups to secure food in grave shortage, to feast on a stranded whale, and to gather firestones and suitable canoe bark, which were found only in certain parts of the *Yahgan* territory. Ownership of personal property, such as weapons, clothing, adornments, and baskets, was vested in the individual. Women and children, as well as men, had well-recognized rights to such things. The ownership of certain other things—food, hut, canoe—appears to have been vested in the biological family.

Food was looked upon as the property and gift of the Supreme Being; wasting it was disrespectful to Him.

Title to personal property was acquired through occupation, labor, donation, and barter. Barter took two forms: plain, or exchange of goods for goods; and by exchange of presents. There was no cur-

3: Lothrop E-5 (1924-1925) 1928
SH6 Yahgan SH6

death of a relative. All these called for vengeance, but the Yahgan seem to have felt antipathy rather than hatred, so vengeance might be deferred for several years, during which time mutual friends might compose the quarrel.

Blood loyalty was recognized among the Yahgan, but apparently was not fiercely cherished as among the Ona. Rev. Thomas Bridges states that when a murder occurred the friends and relatives of the victim would take revenge, but the family of the murderer abandoned him and made no effort to defend him. This certainly is not customary among primitive people with a highly developed consciousness of consanguinity like the Yahgan, and perhaps Mr. Bridges' statement represents the result of missionary contact rather than the original state of affairs.

Organized warfare, during which any member of one group would kill at sight any member of another group, as among the Ona, was unknown to the Yahgan, but blood revenge was sometimes executed on a relative of a murderer.

Initiation

Thanks to the studies of Gusinde and Koppers full and complete information about the Yahgan initiation rites is available, and the reader desirous of fuller information than is given here is referred to their various publications on this subject listed in the bibliography. Two ceremonies were in use among the Yahgan, known as *shiehâus* and *kina*. The first of these, celebrated by both sexes, apparently is the ancient Yahgan rite, while the other corresponds closely to the Ona *klókten* ceremony and represents culture borrowing from that tribe. Both may be described as a systematic educational course for the youth of the tribe—"going to school," the Yahgan called them.

For the *shiehâus* ceremony a large domed hut (*mánaga*), elliptical in outline, was erected near the encampment. The framework was of split saplings an inch or two in diameter, bent and set up to form arch-like ribs, and secured in place by a few horizontal beams (pl. XIV). These timbers were held together by lashings of gut. At either end of the hut were doors, one large to admit spectators, one small for the use of the candidates. On the roof they piled branches of the evergreen antarctic beech to afford shelter to those within, but the sides were left open to the weather. Rows of logs staked in place on the floor divided it into a central gangway